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## Transportation Security Administration Chief Visits NPS, CHDS

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Article By: MC1 Leonardo Carrillo

Transportation Security Administration Chief John Pistole was on the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) campus for a series of meetings and briefings with members of the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) and NPS leadership. He also was among the guests of honor at the school's fall graduation ceremony, presenting diplomas to a cohort of CHDS graduates including several TSA employees.

Pistole, who was confirmed as the TSA's fifth Administrator in July 2010, talked about the challenges being met by his administration and about new strategies to improve practices and security for the public. With the responsibility of overseeing a 60,000-strong workforce and the security operations of more than 450 federalized airports throughout the U.S., Pistole praised the efforts of CHDS and the Naval Postgraduate School, noting that education was key to making TSA a more dynamic and capable organization.

"One of the key enablers for the TSA becoming a high-performing organization is how we train and give additional educational opportunities to our workforce," said Pistole. "NPS gives us the opportunity to give our workers additional training to equip them to become future leaders."

Coming from a 26-year career and an extensive expertise in national defense, security and counterterrorism with the FBI, Pistole knows the value of a well trained force.

NPS offered Pistole a unique training environment where students would have access to real-world scenarios and the guidance of field experts with information and training that no other institution could provide. And since its establishment in 2002, after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the CHDS has been providing this education for the diverse communities of homeland security stakeholders.

"The center was established to provide graduate level education to senior homeland security officials," said CHDS Director Glen Woodbury. "Since the TSA's own creation, the organization has sent its current and emerging leaders to CHDS programs, and provided invaluable expertise to national strategy and policy for homeland security."

This past class of 29 graduates includes professionals from law enforcement, fire safety, homeland security, and military service members. Out of these 29, eight were TSA employees, two of which earned special honors.

Kenneth Fletcher, senior advisor to the deputy administrator of the Arlington, Va. office of TSA, was honored with the Thesis Award and the Curtis H. "Butch" Straub Achievement Award. The award is based on overall academic rigor; quality of the literature review; impact of the study on homeland security strategy and future research implications; quality of analysis and conclusions; quality of organization, writing and overall presentation of thesis.

Karen Keys-Turner, Security Director for the TSA's Flint, Mich. office, received the Philip Zimbardo Award. This award honors a student who demonstrates the best understanding of the psychological aspects of terrorism and whose performance in the master's program best embodies the highest levels of academic achievement and outstanding leadership.

"We look at the students to provide their perspective but also their leadership," said Woodbury. "Having the TSA Administrator here is fabulous, he talked to the class and that provided a great opportunity to exchange ideas, where the students were challenging each other and even challenging the administrator and have the administrator challenge them right back ... a great dynamic that has been the hallmark of the Naval Postgraduate School."



Transportation Security Administration (TSA) leader John Pistole answers questions during a visit to NPS' Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), Dec. 15. Pistole was on campus for a series of meetings and briefings with CHDS and NPS leadership, and to address a cohort of TSA-employed students graduating from the CHDS program this quarter.